श्री दिनशा जे० पटेल: सर, उसका नाम ही नैचुरल आयल गैस है। अपने देश में इसका जो प्रोडक्शन होता है, हम उसे बढ़ाने करने की पूरी कोशिश कर रहे हैं। सम्पूर्ण खपत का 30% देश में ही उत्पादित किया जाता है और 70% हम बाहर से मंगवा रहे हैं। इसका उत्पादन हम और अधिक बढ़ाने की कोशिश कर रहे हैं, इसके लिए धन भी लगा रहे हैं ताकि जल्दी से जल्दी इसे बढ़ाया जा सके। इस कार्य के लिए यह सरकार पूरी कोशिश कर रही है।

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Thank you, Sir, for giving me this opportunity. Sir, since we are talking about the energy needs of the country in this question — hon. Petroleum Minister is here — I would like to ask him whether he is aware that U.S. Senator as a part of US establishment has threatened India against the Iran gas deal. I would like to know whether the Minister will give us a categorical assurance in this House that his Government will not succumb to the U.S. pressures and meet the energy needs of the country by going ahead with Iran gas deal. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please give us a categorical assurance. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): Sir, I can assure the hon. Member that India will not be cowed down by threat from anybody whether it is US senator or anybody else. ...*(Interruptions)*... The Energy Secretary of the United States came to India and he enquired about what is happening to the Iran-Pakistan-India pipeline. We explained to them very clearly that it is not America's business. Whatever is good for us, we will go ahead with that. ...*(interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Extension of ethanol-blended petrol programme

*465. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have proposed to extend ethanol-blended petrol programme to every part of the country;

(b) if so, the number of States in which the programme is presently operational and the number of States where the extension of ethanol-blended petrol programme is planned; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas *vide* Gazette Notification No. G.S.R. 580(E) dated 20.09.2006 has directed that subject to commercial viability, oil marketing companies shall sell 5 per cent of ethanol blended petrol throughout the country w.e.f. 1st Nov., 2006 as per Bureau of Indian Standard Specification, except North Eastern States, Jammu and Kashmir, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep due to logistic reasons.

(b) and (c) The programme is currently operational in ten States namely: Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal, Delhi, Goa, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Jharkhand, Maharashtra (partial), Andhra Pradesh (partial) and Bihar (partial). However the programme has not been implemented in the States of Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Kerala and in the Union territories Daman and Diu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Chandigarh and Pondichery due to various taxes and levies imposed by the respective State Governments on import of ethanol from other ethanol producing States.

Cooperation with Russia in energy sector

*466. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have signed an argreement with Russia on cooperation in energy sector during the recent visit of the President of Russia;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have made an assessment of the commercial benefits to India of such an agreement; and

(d) whether such agreements enhance the energy security of the country?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) to (d) During the recent visit of President of Russia in January 2007 no agreement was signed by Ministry of Petroleum and